

Birds - From the Mountains to the Coast

GEORGIA
AUDUBON



Teri Franzen/Audubon Photography Awards

Overview of Georgia Birds

- Over 400 species of birds have been observed in Georgia with about 250 species in the metro Atlanta area
- Almost half of those species are songbirds
- Shorebirds make up the next largest group
- Georgia is part of the Atlantic Flyway (more birds coming through in the fall)
- Many species use both urban and rural spaces
- Migratory species and resident/year-round species

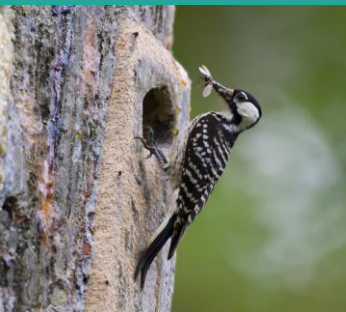
Photo by Rick Dove



Photos by Kat Cass



Owen Deutsch



USFWS SE



Ponds/Lakes/Swamps

- Wading birds (Hérons, egrets, storks, cranes, ibis, spoonbill, limpkin)
- About 18 species in Georgia
- Rely on water for food, nesting habitat, safety
- Shallow water allows foraging
- Few natural lakes in GA - Beavers and swamps are important!!
- Post-breeding dispersal



Photos by Kat Cass



Madeline Poster



Mary Lundberg



Charlie Wait/Audubon
Photography Awards

Headwater Streams

- Louisiana Waterthrush
- Warbler (about 30 species in GA)
- Passerine (about 6,500 species making up about 60% of all birds)
- Very early migrant
- Biological indicator for stream health
- Aquatic invert specialists
- Strong vocalizations can often be heard over the sound of running water
- The genus and species name means “tail-wagger” which is a great field mark for identification of this bird.



Rivers

- Birds are incredible navigators, they use the earth's magnetic field, sun, stars, and natural landmarks such as rivers
- Rivers act as migratory bird highways! Rivers not only help with navigation, but provide vital habitat and food.
- Learn native plants! These plants are critical in supporting migration and breeding birds.



Shirley Donald/Audubon
Photography Awards



Jean Hall/Audubon
Photography Awards



Will Stuart

Coast - Salt Marshes/Ocean

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- Birdiest Place in the State!
- Shorebirds (30+ species) such as plovers and sandpipers
- Gulls, Terns, Skimmers (about 15 species)
- Petrels, Shearwaters, Gannets, etc.
- Honorable mention - Seaside, Saltmarsh, and Nelson's sparrow



Alfred Forns/Audubon
Photography Awards



Jesse Gordon/Audubon
Photography Awards



Jean Hall/Audubon Photography Awards



Trudy Walden/Audubon
Photography Awards

Water is critical for birds in many ways!



- Waterfowl (about 25 species)
- Osprey, bald eagle, belted kingfisher
- Aerial insectivores
- Woodpeckers, rails, blackbirds, and more!
- All birds need water, some less directly than others



Shari McCollough/Audubon
Photography Awards



Jerry am Ende / Audubon
Photography Awards



David Boltz/Audubon
Photography Awards



Dorian Anderson/Audubon
Photography Awards



Christopher Elliott /
Audubon Photography
Awards



Mario Alonso/Audubon
Photography Awards



Ann Kramer/Audubon
Photography Awards

Conservation

GEORGIA
AUDUBON

REPORT

Decline of the North American avifauna

Kenneth V. Rosenberg^{1,2,*}, Adriaan M. Dokter¹, Peter J. Blancher³, John R. Sauer⁴, Adam C. Smith⁵, Paul ...
+ See all authors and affiliations

Science 04 Oct 2019;
Vol. 366, Issue 6461, pp. 120-124
DOI: 10.1126/science.aaw1313

Article

Figures & Data

Info & Metrics

eLetters

PDF

Staggering decline of bird populations

Because birds are conspicuous and easy to identify and count, reliable records of their occurrence have been gathered over many decades in many parts of the world. Drawing on such data for North America, Rosenberg *et al.* report wide-spread population declines of birds over the past half-century, resulting in the cumulative loss of billions of breeding individuals across a wide range of species and habitats. They show that declines are not restricted to rare and threatened species—those once considered common and wide-spread are also diminished. These results have major implications for ecosystem integrity, the conservation of wildlife more broadly, and policies associated with the protection of birds and native ecosystems on which they depend.

Science, this issue p. 120



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THE FOUR MAIN RESULTS

1. There are 2.9 billion fewer breeding birds in North America than there were in 1970.
2. Even common, beloved species have undergone staggering losses.
3. Landscapes are losing their ability to support bird populations.
4. Yet over this same period, landmark conservation efforts have helped bring some birds back.



WHAT'S CAUSING THE LOSSES?

Although the study did not investigate causes, scientists have identified that **habitat loss is the biggest overall driver of bird declines**. When habitat disappears, all the birds that live there lose their homes. Habitat loss occurs when land is converted for agriculture, development, resource extraction, and other uses. **Habitat degradation** is a second cause of losses. In this case, habitat doesn't disappear outright but becomes less able to support birds, such as when habitat is fragmented, altered by invasive plants, or when water quality is compromised.

Aside from habitat loss and degradation, **other human-caused threats to birds** come from cats, window collisions, vehicles, power lines, communication towers, and wind turbines.

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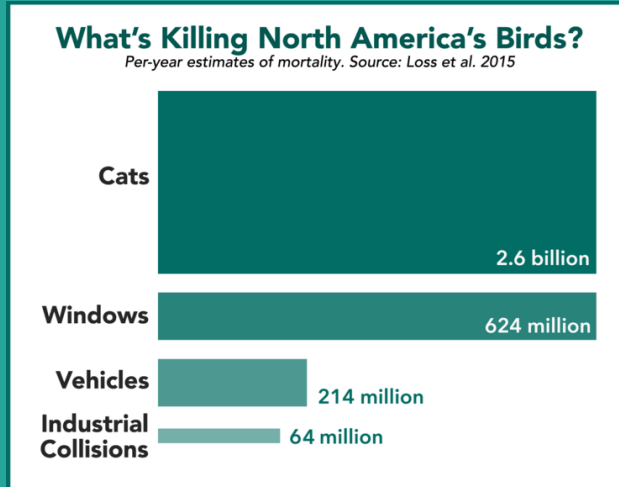
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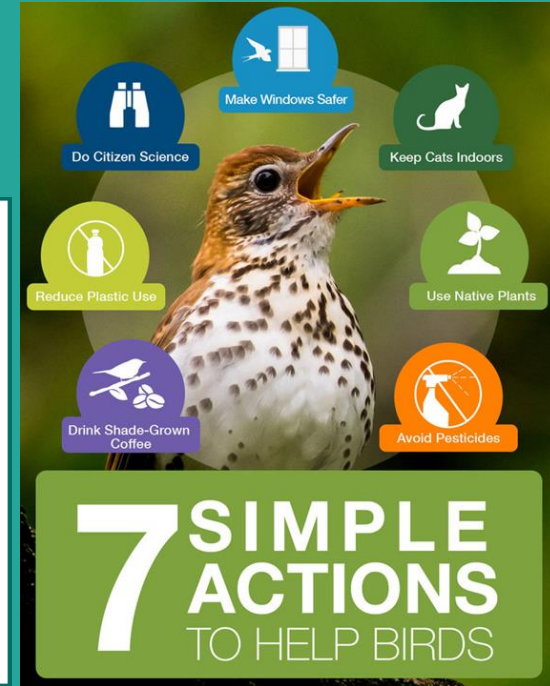
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Conservation

- Habitat loss/degradation
 - Advocate for land protection
 - Invasive Species
 - Habitat Restoration
 - Fire
- Keep cats inside
- Pesticides
- Plant native plants



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Visit 3billionbirds.org For more info!

Wood Thrush

- Beautiful flute-like call
- Rely on healthy stands of deciduous forest for food/nesting
- Shade-grown Coffee

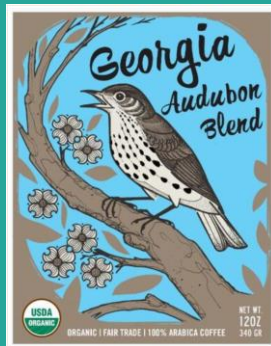


Photo by Megumi Aita



Distribution of the Wood Thrush



Beautyberry



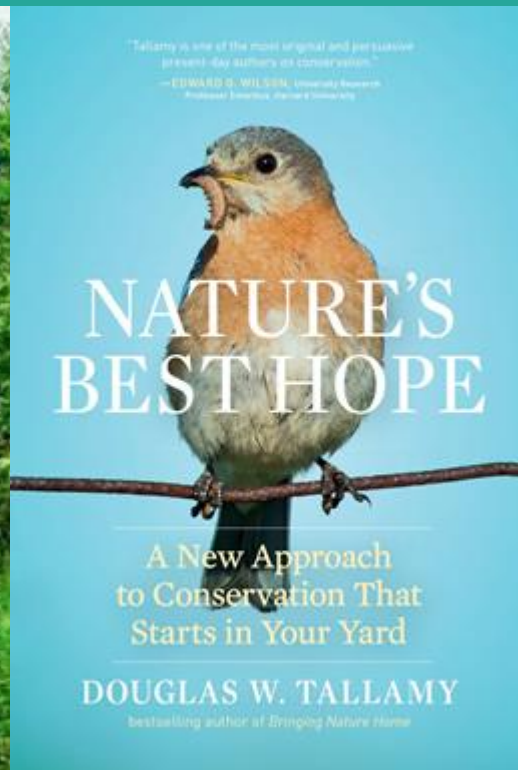
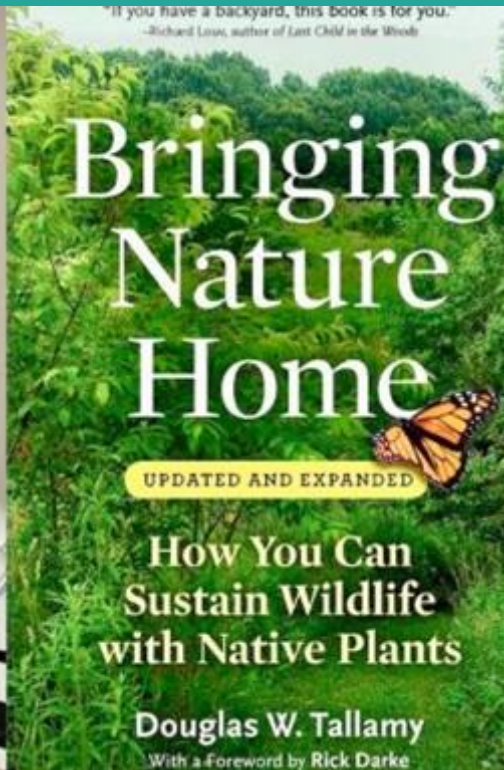
Elderberry



Hearts-a-Bustin'

Conservation - Native Plants

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WILDLIFE SANCTUARY PROGRAM

Bee Balm at Tapestry Community. Photo by Dottie Head

CERTIFY YOUR YARD AS A WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Conservation

- Window collisions kill up to 1 billion birds a year
- Minimize artificial light
- Lights Out GA
- Project Safe Flight



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Seeing beyond

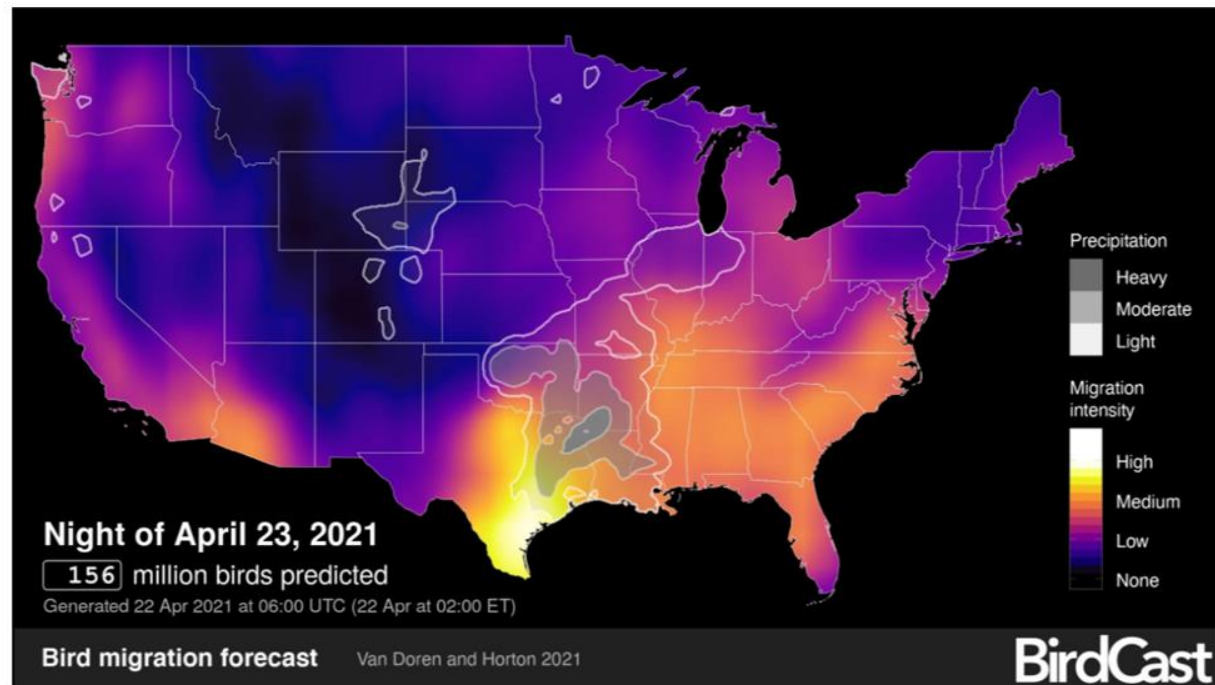
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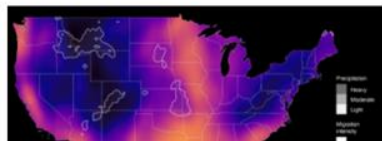


MIGRATION TOOLS **ACTIVE** Forecasting ends Jun 01, 2021



Bird migration forecast maps

Bird migration forecast maps show predicted nocturnal migration 3 hours after local sunset and are updated every 6 hours. Colorado State University and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology currently produce these forecasts. [Learn more](#)



Building places where birds and people thrive.



We approach our work through conservation, education, and community engagement.

We offer:

- **FREE** field trips around metro Atlanta and beyond
- Bird and nature workshops
- Outreach programs for youth and adults
- Professional Development for teachers
- Volunteer opportunities
- Monthly print and electronic newsletters
- Georgia Bird Fest!

Conservation Highlights:

- Wildlife Sanctuary Certification
- Chimney Swift Towers
- Nestboxes for Nuthatches
- Project Safe Flight
- Habitat Restoration
- Bird Friendly coffee



Mary Berry/Audubon Photography Awards



Photo by David Boltz



Thank you!



2022
GEORGIA BIRDFEST
#GABirdFest

April 23 to May 15
georgiaaudubon.org/birdfest



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